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## LOUGHCREW, COUNTY OF MEATH.

SIR—I wish some of your contributors would favour your readers with a drawing of the elevation of the magnificent mansion of James Lenox William Napier, Esq. erected at an immense expense, since the year 1820, at Loughcrew, near Oldcastle, county of Meath. Fifteen years have elapsed since I feasted my eyes upon the beautiful scenery of that lovely spot, but memory still retains their images. The venerable church and burying-ground, where my ancestors lie entombed—the fine woods of Kilrush and Dromone, Lough Creevie, with its small wild green island, only inhabited by water coots; near the church, the small moat, on which tradition says a youth fell asleep, and was taken in by the “good people,” and saw strange sights, and on awaking, he found a pair of new and handsome bag-pipes beside him, and though hitherto professing no skill whatever in music, from that hour was able to play a variety of tunes. Opposite the church, on what is now a green level field, it is said there was formerly a town of some consequence, with a good inn, but no vestige of it remains. In the back ground are three hills, Corstown, Newtown, and Kearn or Cairn-bawn, which signifies the white-heap, so called from an immense heap of stones, said by the credulous and ignorant, to have been deposited there in days of other years, by an ancient witch, who, filling her apron, hopped over to Newtown-hill, and there dropped a sufficient quantity to raise another large heap—then taking a second hop to Corstown-hill, she succeeded in emptying her apron, and forming a third conspicuous heap, but unhappily broke her leg; here is shown a large stone, formed like a sofa-bed, which is called the witches-bed or chair, and contained a hole for her pipe. How absurd an idea, as tobacco is rather of modern introduction; yet such are the legends and stories prevalent over the entire country. There is another stone shown which, it is said, marks her burial-place—there are circles of stones on one side of the cairn, and similar circles on the top of Kearn-bawn. I have no doubt but some of the learned of the present time may be able to assign some rational cause for the erection of those rude heaps. On Newtown-hill is a large sloping-stone of a reddish cast, which the peasantry say was a Druid’s altar, and they fancy the red tinge proceeds from the blood of the human victims formerly sacrificed upon it. I well recollect in my youthful days, being shown a remarkable hollow in the south side of this hill, evidently formed by art, with a collection of stones close to it, and from the name given to it by the country people, I used to fancy it might have been designed in Fingal’s time for dressing venison in the manner described by Ossian. Newtown-hill commands an extensive prospect, embracing portions of at least five counties. Ten miles off to the east, may be descried the ancient round tower that stands near Kells, which was at one time surrounded by a grove of trees; in another direction, a curious shaped hill, called the Ben or Bin of Fore, near which are the fine ruins of Fore; about a mile and a half from Loughcrew, appear the ruins of the Castle of Moylagh or Mylogh, which is still used as a burying-place. I shall close this short and very imperfect sketch of this fine, and as I understand, rapidly improving place, by two or three extracts from a poem of a native bard, a poor labourer in a mill, called James Martin, who then resided about a mile from Loughcrew:

But to the north the lofty mountains rise,  
Which at a distance seem to prop the skies;  
Aloft in air, and far above the west,  
High Kearn-bawn displays his verdant crest;  
His tow’ring head within the clouds he hides,  
Whilst bubbling rills gush limpid from his sides—  
As down the steep the crystal currents run,  
Their glossy dimples glisten to the sun.  
On this high mountain now in ruins, stands  
A pagan altar, rear’d by Druids’ hands—  
To Baal erected, who, as authors say,  
Was once here worshipp’d as the god of day,

When superstition held her gloomy throne,  
Before the Gospel in Hibernia shone,  
The Druids here the people would convene,  
That god to worship at their lofty fane—  
Soon as bright Sol appeared to mortal view,  
Or ting’d the mountain with a golden hue,  
The priests, arrayed in robes of vivid white,  
Consumed sweet incense to the orb of light;  
Then offered praise, and hymns unhallow’d sung,  
And in the flames the destined victim flung;  
But now these errors have fled far from hence,  
Since pure religion banish’d ignorance,  
By Gospel truth from Pagan folly freed,  
No slaughtered victims to their idol bleed.  
No more such flames on this high altar glare—  
No fuming incense scents the ambient air;  
Instead of which, the ascending breezes blow  
Redolent odours from the plain below.  
Here first bright Phebus darts his morning ray,  
When in this isle he gilds the face of day;  
And when at eve he gains th’ Atlantic main,  
His latest ray will kiss this ancient fane.

Now, from the mount descending to the vale,  
What charming vistas do the sight regale—  
A walled-in park, where nimble deer abide,  
And covert glens, where subtle foxes hide.

Nor less Kilrush attracts the charmed sight  
To scenes romantic, which create delight—  
Where from the plain the lofty hill ascends,  
O’er craggy rocks the wavy forest bends;  
From base to vertex, on each sloping side,  
Trees above trees the rugged surface hide,  
Whose spreading branches screen the scented beds  
Where cowslips pale, and violets, rear their heads—  
Within those shades, both hares and foxes play  
Through thickets close, impervious to the day,  
Around whose verges in abundance grow  
The scarlet haw, brown nut, and jetty sloe.  
Beneath this hill, where verdant valleys smile,  
A crystal lake surrounds a shrub-crowned isle.

Then from the lake, extending to Dromone,  
Where rising hills beneath their forests groan,  
The flocks and herds thro’ wide-spread valleys rove,  
And browse and bleat along the sheltry grove.  
Here mountains, valleys, forests, lawns, and streams,  
(Though not a rival for the “silver Thames,”)  
Groves, verdant plains, and fields of tillage, too,  
Combine at once to beautify Loughcrew.

Hoping some other hand may treat us with a description of this loved spot of my youth, in its present improved state, I remain,

ARAB EASTFOREST.

County of Cork.

In the closing number of our last volume we mentioned, that we had ordered a new machine from Messrs. Girdwood & Co. of Glasgow; and hoped on its arrival to be able to do greater justice to the printing of our woodcuts, than had previously been the case. Circumstances delayed the completion of the machine. It has, however, at length arrived, and the present number of the Journal has been printed by it. We leave the work to speak for itself, as we conceive the improvement must at once be apparent. In reference to the Machine, we think it but justice to the respectable firm of Girdwood and Co. to say, that it gives us perfect satisfaction; and we would not now exchange it for the very best machine we have ever seen, made in London or Manchester.